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ABSTRACT

This account of an international seminar on language instruction, attended by 33 representatives of member states in the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), describes proposed steps to improve: (1) curriculum, (2) methods, (3) textbooks, (4) teaching materials, and (5) general school activities. With the vision of a world community in mind, the seminar focused its attention on six main topics: (1) humanistic aspects of modern language teaching, (2) language instruction as the key to understanding other civilizations and peoples, (3) methodology, (4) audiovisual aids, (5) psychology of language teaching, including tests and measurements, and (6) teacher training. Also discussed are the background, preparation, composition, and organization of the seminar; special topics; and other reports and recommendations. Appendixes contain titles of selected documents used in the seminar and names of participants. (RL)

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# UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

## AN ACCOUNT OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE TEACHING OF MODERN LANGUAGES TOWARDS EDUCATION FOR LIVING IN A WORLD COMMUNITY

Nuwara Eliya, Ceylon
3-28 August 1953

## I. THE BACKGROUND OF THE SEMINAR

By resolution 1.331 of the programme of Unesco for 1953, the Director-General was authorized to organize a seminar on the teaching of modern languages as one of a number of steps to be taken "to assist Member States in improving curricula, methods, textbooks, teaching materials and general school activities, in elementary and secondary schools as well as in teacher training institutions, with a view to promoting their contribution to education for living in a world community."

As early as 1947, on the occasion of the first Unesco seminar on the general subject of Education for International Understanding, it was realized that the modern language teacher, no less than the teacher of history, or geography, or civics, had a part of the first importance to play in the development of more enlightened attitudes both in the classroom and outside it. A working party formed in the course of this seminar made special recommendations for further study in the field of modern language teaching and these were echoed in the findings of a committee of language experts which met at Unesco House the same year.

At every session of the General Conference of Unesco from 1948 onwards resolutions were adopted urging, in various terms, a study of the methods of teaching modern languages in order to make them a more effective instrument for achieving international understanding.

## II. THE PREPARATION OF THE SEMINAR

During 1951, arrangements were made with a number of organizations and individuals to provide background papers or material of a general nature which could be used for future working papers. These organizations included the International Bureau of Education and the International Federation of Modern Language Teachers. Among individual scholars concerned with this advance preparation were Professor Fr. Closset of the University of Liège (Belgium) and Professor P. Gurrey, formerly of the University of London and the University College of the Gold Coast. At the end of 1951, the Secretariat of Unesco began making the actual preparations for the seminar, which was to be held during the summer of 1953.

The first problem was the delimitation of the field of study. It seemed clear that the seminar should concern itself not only with modern language teaching in the classroom but also with such important contemporary problems as mass language teaching to migrants and to adult groups in general. On the other hand, a consideration of the so-called "artificial languages" or of the teaching of literature as a sequel to the teaching of language would extend the frontiers of discussion too far. Finally, it was decided to organize the work of the seminar around six main topics. These were:

I. The humanistic aspect of the teaching of modern languages
II. The teaching of modern languages as a key to the understanding of other civilizations and peoples
III. The methodology of language teaching
IV. Audio-visual aids
V. The psychological aspects of language teaching, including tests and measurements
VI. The training of modern language teachers

This arrangement had the advantage of starting with aims and proceeding through methods to a consideration of special problems.

Throughout 1952 and the early part of 1953 working papers were prepared, some by National Commissions and some by individual scholars. In addition, the Secretariat undertook the elaboration of a "Working Bibliography" and of a book of annotated charts "Modern Languages in the Schools", designed to show the pattern of modern language teaching in the educational systems of a representative number of Member States. (A list of these working papers appears at Appendix A.)

In a number of Member States, National Commissions appointed sub-committees well in advance of the seminar to review the field of future study and to assist the Secretariat of Unesco in the collection of material. Of these, the sub-committee appointed by the French National Commission deserves special mention because of the example it furnished for future collaboration between National Commissions and the Secretariat of Unesco, when the preparation of seminars is concerned. A body consisting of some twenty French modern language specialists, with a leavening of classicists, philosophers and psychologists, met at fortnightly intervals from November 1952 to June 1953, studied each of the six proposed main topics in turn and prepared a comprehensive document, L'Enseignement des langues vivantes et la compréhension internationale which was published in time for distribution at the seminar.

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At the end of 1952, Professor Theodore Andersson, Director of the Master of Arts in Teaching Programme at Yale University (United States of America), was invited to assume the directorship of the seminar. He came to Paris for a week's consultations with the Secretariat in December of the same year.

A number of professional advisers were next appointed to assist the director. Professor Louis Landré, of the University of Paris, President of the French Modern Language Teachers Association and of the International Federation of Modern Language Teachers, was invited to lead in discussions of General Topics I and II. Dr. Max Müller of Iserlohn, editor of the Bulletin of the German Modern Language Teachers Association, was asked to make himself responsible for problems of methodology (General Topic III). On his sudden and untimely death, a bare two months before the seminar opened, his place was taken at very short notice by his colleague Oberschulrat Dr. Adolf Bohlen, the President of the German Modern Language Teachers Association and Director of the "Landesinstitut für neue Sprachen" at Münster. Miss S. Panandikar, Principal of the Secondary Training College at Bombay, assumed charge of General Topics V and VI. A United States expert in the field of audio-visual aids (General Topic IV) was unfortunately unable to be present. In consequence, discussions under this heading were curtailed and the task of exposition was undertaken by qualified volunteers chosen from among the participants.

As to the choice of a suitable host country, in view of the fact that all previous seminars dealing with the relationship between education and international understanding had been held in the Western Hemisphere, it was felt that Asian Member States had established a strong claim to prior consideration. It was also realized that problems of language were particularly complex in that area and that nowhere was there a more urgent need for the development of language teaching techniques, particularly in the case of those languages which can serve as a means of communication with the rest of the world. The Director-General was therefore very ready to accept an invitation extended by the Government of Ceylon, which, at later stages, gave valuable advice on the choice of a site, furnished hospitality and material assistance of every kind and made available for the post of Administrator of the seminar a Deputy Director of Education, Col. R. J. F. Mendis, OBE.

## III. COMPOSITION OF THE SEMINAR

The seminar was attended by 33 participants from 18 Member States: Australia, Cambodia, Canada, Ceylon, France, German Federal Republic, India, Indonesia, Israel, Italy and Trust Territory of Somaliland, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Pakistan, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom, United States of America, Viet-Nam.

There were in addition one observer from each of the three following organizations: Indian National Science Documentation Centre (INSDOC), New Education Fellowship, World Organization of the Teaching Profession.

(A complete list of the working members of the seminar is given as Appendix B. )

## IV. SETTING UP THE SEMINAR

The Director and his professional advisers, the Unesco representative, the Administrator, and their respective staffs, spent the week previous to the opening of the seminar in a number of preparatory tasks.

A reference library was set up for the convenience of participants while in a large room next to the conference hall over a thousand textbooks and teachers' manuals, emanating from 23 Member States, were put on display.

As it was clear that there would be not more than approximately forty members of the seminar, the Director decided that all discussions could normally be conducted in plenary session. It was agreed that regular morning and afternoon sessions would be devoted to the presentation of the General Topics listed above, with late afternoon sessions reserved for Special Topics.

Later, when the seminar had got under way, committees were appointed by the Director after the discussion of each General Topic had ended. These committees drafted reports which were debated, amended and adopted in plenary session during the last two days of the seminar. These reports summed up the general sense of the meeting. Where there was virtual unanimity, they reflect the proceedings and the conclusions reached with considerable accuracy, but where there was definite disagreement the final report usually embodied a watered down compromise statement which fails to reflect the useful and suggestive clash of opinion.

For this reason it has been decided not to issue these reports in full for general distribution. Ample quotations from them appear in the present document which is designed to give a synopsis of the proceedings of the seminar. A more detailed study will be prepared, during 1954, by the Secretariat of Unesco in collaboration with the Director of the seminar.

The seminar opened on the morning of Monday, 3 August, with an address of welcome delivered on behalf of the Government of Ceylon by the Hon. N. K. Banda, Minister of Education. Addresses were also delivered by the Director and by the Unesco representative. The latter read a special message prepared by the Director-General of Unesco, embodying a statement of policy which may be said to have served as the keynote for the seminar:

> "As the champion of culture, Unesco has a deep regard for the diversity of languages, which are among the most subtle and the most individual instruments for the expression of genius. The national or regional languages are also, excepting cases of major obstacles, the most reliable means of spreading fundamental education and conducting primary education. As the advocate of international understanding, however,

Unesco has set itself to promote familiarity with the most widely spoken languages, as a means of communicating with larger sections of the world's population. In so doing, the Organization is striving to make it easier for all the peoples to acquaint themselves with the world's civilization as a whole, while at the same time safeguarding and indeed developing the essential individuality of each one of them. The high responsibility you have to discharge is therefore not only to investigate the best methods of teaching one of the languages most widely spoken throughout the world but also to use that teaching to foster mutual understanding and peaceful co-operation among the peoples."

The afternoon session of the opening day was devoted to a general discussion of the agenda. Discussion of the General Topics opened on the morning of Tuesday, 4 August.

## V. THE GENERAL TOPICS

1. The humanistic aspect of the teaching of modern languages

What might be described as the cultural and, in the broader sense, educational aspects of modern language teaching were discussed on 4 and 5 August. Professor Landré touched on the following points in his presentation of the subject:

(a) The historical development of the "modern humanities" considered as a discipline;
(b) The uses of this discipline in developing the intellect;
(c) The development of the personality arising out of the mastery of a new idiom;
(d) The broadening of the cultural horizon leading to a more fully developed sense of humanity and of human brotherhood;
(e) The ways and means of emphasizing the humanistic aspect at appropriate stages in a modern language course;
(f) The pitfalls the teacher must avoid: incoherence, platitude, exaggeration.

The general discussion in this field revealed little real difference of opinion but some Asian participants suggested that, for an Easterner, learning a Western language involved a more complete exile from the familiar and hence was likely to induce a greater element of psychological shock which the teacher would be obliged to overcome. A Westerner learning a Western language remains in the same cultural continuum which has come down to him from the Greek and Latin classics through the Renaissance. The Easterner's classics are written in Sanskrit, Pali or Persian and to him the Renaissance, particularly in its more secular aspects, is an essentially alien idea.

Asian participants also referred to the problem raised by the vestiges of linguistic imperialism still lingering on from the colonial period only now coming to a close. Teachers of certain modern languages in this area have therefore to overcome a definite animus. This particular anxiety is reflected in the last sentence of the report drafted at the conclusion of this discussion. This report is reproduced here in full:

1. The seminar discussed as its first main topic the educational aspects of the teaching of modern languages. There was general agreement that this study can and should rank with that of the classical languages, whether East or West, and with the study of the arts and sciences, as an instrument of education capable of developing the highest cultural qualities: the mastery of the physical organs of speech; the intellectual qualities of mental discipline, receptivity to and critical appreciation of new ideas, and the power of self-expression; the emotional and spiritual potentialities afforded by access to the finest expressions of human experience and aspirations.
2. The seminar was therefore of the opinion that, quite apart from utilitarian considerations, the study of one or more modern languages, in addition to that of the mother tongue, must find a place in any educational system aiming to preserve and develop the highest powers of the human mind and spirit. The seminar felt, however, that if the fullest benefit is to be derived from the learning of a modern language, in consonance with the aims just expressed, the language studied should preferably be a matter of a country's choice.

2. The teaching of modern languages as a key to the understanding of other civilizations and peoples

On 6 and 7 August this subject was introduced by Professor Landré under the following main headings:

(a) The development in the presentation of a foreign civilization at different stages in a modern language course;
(b) The contribution of geography, cultural history, folklore, the history of art and handicrafts, religion and philosophy, politics and economics, social theory;
(c) The proper integration of such teaching with practical illustrations;
(d) Dangers and limitations of the method.

Here again, during the discussion, there was little disagreement on fundamentals. Participants were practically unanimous in deploring the restrictive effect often exercised by examination requirements and streamlined syllabuses which prevent the teacher from developing this aspect of his subject.

There were useful discussions of the general problem of stereotypes and of the bias imparted by teaching contemporary civilization from outdated texts.

The following extracts from the report will serve to show the general trend of opinion:

It was generally agreed that information (as customs, institutions, ways of life, history of the people, etc.) should have a place in language teaching from the most elementary to the most advanced stages. The teaching given should include indications of the origin of the people and of the various elements from which its language has been formed. The geography of the country concerned should also be

studied, along with its folk.ore, its religion, its economic, social and political problems and its achievements in all branches of the arts and sciences. Stress was laid upon the danger of prejudiced and stereotyped views. There should be no undue adulation of the foreign country; rather should this material be presented and used in such a manner as to train the pupil or student in objective appreciation of a civilization different from his own. In this way he can be brought, through the study of modern languages, to a fuller awareness of mankind, a richer knowledge of himself and a clearer realization of the place in the world community of both his own and foreign countries.

It was recognized that where the differences between the pupil's way of life and that of the country whose language he is studying are particularly marked it may be difficult to present the life of the foreign people in a manner that the pupil can understand ... but even in the most extreme cases it is possible to find some points of common interest.

/Though/ in some countries the study of foreign civilizations might be considered of no immediate practical value or even inimical to the best interests of the pupil's own country, the seminar was strongly of the opinion that knowledge of other countries cannot be anything but beneficial both to the individual and to the community to which he belongs.

The requirements of syllabuses and examinations might be so rigid as to preclude any study of institutions and civilizations. The seminar strongly deprecated any such system on the grounds that it may well hamper even the pupil's linguistic progress by depriving him of the stimulus provided by the broader approach, and that moreover it prevents him from deriving the fullest cultural benefit from his studies.

The seminar considered that it was important that the choice of this material should be such as to include a true picture of contemporary life.

Along with the learning of foreign languages there should be the fullest possible study of foreign civilizations. /Material/ should preferably be prepared by teachers or other persons having a thorough knowledge both of the country whose language is being studied and of the country of the pupil learning it.

3. <u>The methodology of language teaching</u>

The whole of the second week of the seminar was devoted to this subject which was presented by Dr. Bohlen. The following may be listed as the main headings:

(a) Ways and means of teaching languages at various levels;
(b) The teaching of pronunciation in beginners' classes;
(c) Reading lessons at various levels;
(d) Oral and written exercises;
(e) Grammar teaching;
(f) Understanding the spirit of a language.

The doctrine expounded had the support of Continental European teachers accustomed to viewing modern language teaching as a closely integrated part of secondary education, a discipline whose methods have been slowly evolved over a long period of time and in which cultural goals must on no account be sacrificed to the mere acquisition of linguistic skills.

It was soon apparent, however, that other points of view were represented at the seminar. A decided majority of the Anglo-American delegates argued against the formal aspects of language learning and presented the case for the so-called simplified and linguistic methods which emphasize the structural approach and the importance of linguistic analysis.

For a variety of reasons, a majority of participants from Asia, the Middle East and Australia tended to support the "modernists" against the "traditionalists". As in reality two different kinds of learning were involved, the debate was sometimes conducted at cross purposes, but there emerged a number of interesting points:

(a) Both in the United Kingdom and in the United States of America methods of teaching English as a second language have been devised and are being imparted to teachers of English throughout the world. No evidence was presented to show that similar methods had been evolved for the teaching of other important link languages, though it is essential, in the interests of international understanding, that their diffusion should keep pace with the diffusion of English.

(b) It is, however, by no means certain that the methods now being used for teaching English as a second language are all as "new" as is commonly believed.

(c) Language teachers in Australia and in Israel, working independently to devise methods for teaching the national language to migrants stemming from a great variety of linguistic backgrounds, seem to have reached approximately the same conclusions. It can therefore be said that there now exists a general method for teaching a language to migrants. This constitutes an important contribution to the problem of aculturation and to the relief of tensions in this field.

Though the report on this topic proved the most difficult to draft, agreement was finally reached on a surprisingly broad basis, and the seminar in plenary session adopted the following general principles which are quoted from the final report:

The approach should be primarily oral;
Active methods of teaching should be used as far as possible;
The greatest possible use of the foreign tongue should be made in the classroom;
The difficulties of the foreign tongue in the matter of pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar should be carefully graded for presentation;

The teaching of a language should be considered more as the imparting of a skill than as the provision of information about the forms of the language...
The four fundamental skills to be taught are: understanding, speaking, reading, and writing, in the order named. The teaching method may vary in the later stages according to the order of preference in which these skills are placed...
In the initial stage it is particularly important that the material should be graded in such a way as to give the pupil the maximum sense of achievement. The method of presentation should be so designed as to encourage mental activity on the part of the pupils. Because of the very special nature of language teaching, as well as on general educational grounds, it is vital that classes should be small...
From the very early stages an accurate pronunciation including intonation should be aimed at. In the achieving of this object, frequent repetition, speaking and singing in chorus have an important part to play and are vital adjuncts of the oral approach...
The effectiveness of reading exercises depends to a large extent on the choice of suitable texts. In this connexion one of the principal tasks of the teacher is the skilful preparation of the material in such a way as to enable the pupil to assimilate it more easily. It was agreed that reading is a frustrating exercise unless considerable oral ability has been previously acquired, and unless difficulties have been dealt with beforehand, and new words and expressions explained in different contexts. Unless this preparatory work is well done, reading becomes mere deciphering. Silent reading, followed by oral discussion, the division of large classes into smaller groups for reading, voluntary out of class reading, all were approved of as useful methods of encouraging pupils to read...
It was agreed that classroom libraries of suitable texts were a necessary adjunct of modern language teaching...
The general opinion was that in the early stages translation should not be used. At this level the use of copying exercises, dictation, substitution tables and story reproduction will lead on to the writing of simple descriptive passages based on familiar material...
/There should be no/ teaching of formal grammar in the early stages....
After the elementary stages of language study, there is room for a more formal approach to grammar, but even here it would be preferable to use inductive methods which encourage students to discover the rules of grammar for themselves...
The results of linguistic research should be carefully considered by the teaching profession in order that techniques of presentation may be improved...
In the early stages, the acquisition of a basic vocabulary can be greatly assisted by the memorization of songs, rhymes and easy poems. At all levels, vocabulary building should mean more than the mere accumulation of words and should be associated with the learning of the essential structural features, both formal and semantic, of the language. At more advanced levels, there should be opportunity for the study of the foreign language as a means of expression which can be compared with the mother tongue. This study will also be a valuable means of conveying to pupils ideas concerning the country under study other than purely linguistic ones.

4. Audio-visual aids

August 17 was devoted to the showing of selected language teaching films and filmstrips from France, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, with a general discussion led by Dr. Presswood (United Kingdom); 18 August to a demonstration of tape recording apparatus linked with a filmstrip projection system lent by Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. followed by a discussion of the use of tape recorders led by Professor McQuown (United States of America); 19 August to a discussion of the use of radio with the playing of selected recordings under the supervision of Mr. McCusker (Australia). These included recordings produced in Australia, Austria, Denmark, Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Basing their opinions not solely on the films shown at the seminar but on their general experience in this field, participants were inclined to the view that the really satisfactory language teaching film had not yet been made. The tape recorder seemed a more useful auxiliary at this stage, though its relatively high cost precluded it from being used extensively in all but the wealthiest countries. The use of radio as an aid to language teaching won the widest support and there was a general feeling that television might, during the next few years, prove to be of the greatest importance.

The following extracts are from the report that was adopted:
A well planned textbook can combine repetition with a sense of progress, but, once a film has been shown, a repetition of it and a detailed study of its several parts are likely to prove tedious...
Films can be an excellent vehicle for acquainting the pupils with the daily life of the people whose language is being studied, but it is important that the characters in the film should behave naturally and not be made to do things merely to bring home some linguistic lesson...
Films whose aim is to teach linguistic points can be of great value in showing the functioning of the organs of speech and in the teaching of pronunciation. Such films can also be utilized for the introduction of grammatical forms...
Any film is likely to have a powerful impact on the pupil... As a film will be regarded by the pupil as an authoritative document, it is essential that the utmost care be taken in making it so that the result may be an artistic whole carefully designed to achieve the desired educational end...

In the making of language teaching films, whilst the advice of the film expert should obviously be carefully heeded, it is essential that pedagogical considerations should be the determining factor in any case of conflict between the technical adviser and the language teacher...
It should be recognized that when a film is shown the class is frequently passive. Language teaching films should therefore be short and, except in the case of supplementary type of film, should deal with only one linguistic point...
If language teaching films are used, it is important that they be carefully integrated into the rest of the course...
The filmstrip offers in a compact, economical and easily transportable form a large store of pictorial material which can be utilized for the teaching of almost any language structure. A strip showing a series of actions can,for instance, be used for the practice of all tenses and of both simple and complex sentences...
The filmstrip projector is not only cheap but it can also be used in areas where electric supply is not available...
The wise teacher will however take care not to forfeit the interest of his class by too frequently using the same strip for different purposes...
The pictorial material used as the basis of language teaching should be related to the country whose language is being learned and reflect the ways of its people.
Apart from their use in language teaching, filmstrips can and should be widely used to give background knowledge of civilization and institutions.
Filmstrips have the full advantage of economy in production and flexibility in use...
The tape recorder was felt to have two principal functions: first as an aid in linguistic analysis ...; secondly as a means of freezing the utterances of a native speaker, it permits subsequent repeated play back of the same utterances, with the same rhythm, phrasing and intonation. As a model for imitation, such a recording may be used for additional drill outside the class...
A double channel recorder may be used by the pupil for recording his own repetitions of the model, and for subsequent comparison of original and repetition, by himself and by his teacher. The pupil may thus have his attention called to his errors and he may be led more quickly to correct them...
The tape recorder can also be used for the making of gramophone records to be used in schools...
Portable tape recorders can also be operated from batteries...
The tape recorder is, however, comparatively expensive, which may stand in the way of its being used very largely in educational institutions...
Radio /is/ able to present a comprehensive course in language teaching. The flexibility and "immediacy" of radio /gives/ it certain advantages over other media...
There should be the closest possible co-operation between the educational and broadcasting authorities. Much of the success of language broadcasts depends on the close co-operation of teachers in the planning, use and assessment of broadcast services...
Language broadcasts should offer, among other things:
(a) Good modes of speech, conversation and pronunciation;
(b) Examples of imaginative presentation;
(c) Supplementary and enriching activities;
(d) Direct presentation of aspects of the culture of the people whose language is being taught...
Preparation of broadcasts calls for co-operation between linguists, teachers, script writers, producers, and actors. In the final analysis, however, the responsibility ... must rest with the language teaching specialist...
Radio broadcasts ... /can/ be recorded on gramophone records and thus fuller use of broadcast lessons could be made for classroom teaching...
Television may have great potentialities for language teaching in the future...

5. The psychological aspects of language teaching, including tests and measurements

Miss Panandikar presented this General Topic and led the discussions which took place during the last two days of the third week of the seminar. A great variety of topics were raised during her presentation covering:

(a) Consideration of the type of learning to which language learning belongs;
(b) The psychological characteristics useful for language learning at primary, secondary and post-school levels;
(c) The stages of language learning including motivation and the learning process at the three levels, retention, fixation, recall and the teaching corollaries proper to each stage;
(d) The factors on which success in language learning depends: interest, effort, application, communicative temperament, home environment, personal history, general intelligence, linguistic ability;
(e) Tests (prognosis tests, new type tests, standardized tests) and examinations;
(f) The effects of modern language study on general mental development and on achievement in the mother tongue;
(g) The question of the optimum age for beginning modern language teaching.

It proved difficult to dispose of all these topics adequately in the time allotted, but there were detailed and fruitful discussions on tests, the effect of second language learning on the mother tongue and the optimum age for beginning language studies. In connexion with the last named topic, it was clear that an address on the

experimental teaching of modern languages in the elementary schools of the United States of America delivered at the seminar a few days earlier by the Director had made a deep impression and had led some participants to re-examine traditional views.

Significant extracts from the report follow:

It was agreed that learning a language was a skill as seen in learning to speak and write the language, specially in its early stages, and in mastering the mechanics of reading the new language. It was also learning of the problem solving type in its receptive aspects of understanding, speech or writing. In its cultural aspects it was learning in the sense of assimilation of ideas...

It was agreed that a child of 6-10 plus had certain distinct advantages favouring learning a new language over the adolescent or the adult in the matter of greater flexibility of his vocal organs, his spontaneous oral imitation, his sensitivity to the forms of speech he heard and in his natural love of repetition. In the adolescent and the adult some of these would be weaker, but organized memorizing and greater capacity for effort would supplement them. On the emotional side, a small child would be less self-conscious and more of an extrovert, whereas an adolescent's growing self-consciousness was likely to stand in the way of learning a new language. An adult would, on the other hand, have got over the self-consciousness of adolescence to a great extent.

Whereas a child would learn a modern language just as a response to the situation and the demands made on him by the teacher and the school, an adolescent might tend to question its utility and might have a certain resistance towards learning the new language. However, in the modern world, with its various inventions bringing the distant parts of the world together through travel, the cinema and the radio, proper motivation of an adolescent would not be a difficult matter in terms of his characteristic attitudes and interests...

In the process of learning a language... constant practice and repetition are necessary to form the habits and reflexes necessary for speech. Such learning requires the use of the intellect... A purely mechanical and automatic drill /should/ have no place in human learning. In presenting material to pupils there must be grading in relation to the structure of the language, modified by psychological considerations such as interest, motivation and the relation between the mother tongue of the pupil and the language taught. In the case of reading and understanding, once the mechanics are mastered, intellectual abilities and insight can be used to a greater extent...

For retention and recall, it was seen that time and rest were required for proper consolidation in the mental structure and that judicious intervals of rest were as useful as periods of practice.

In considering the qualities that make for success in language learning, the special question discussed was that of linguistic ability. From the results of ... experiments mentioned and ... case studies cited, it was seen that correlation between attainment in one's first language and in the languages learnt later was not high... Generally, however, it could be said that children and adults of normal general intelligence were capable of learning a language if right methods were used and proper motivation secured.

There was a considerable divergence of opinion on the question /of tests/. According to one view, new type tests and standardized tests for purposes of prognosis, diagnosis and measuring a pupil's attainment in language were mechanical and could test only the mechanical aspects of language learning. These would be no measure of creative ability, or style, or thought. According to the other view, the tests, especially good standardized tests, would, in the hands of a good teacher, be a scientific and objective instrument and could be used with advantage, provided that they were used in combination with other devices of a broader and more personal type. The existing prognosis tests, it was felt, did not appear to have a high validity and could not be used by themselves. On this view, both objective tests and standardized tests would be of very great use as a basis for research... on all problems pertaining to modern language teaching...

In view of the latest findings on the problem of mental discipline, a study of a modern language should go a long way towards disciplining and developing the mind, provided that in the teaching of the language an appeal was made to the interests of the learner and an opportunity given to him to use his insight and the ideals formed in his own mind. The study of a new language can enrich the mind not so much by adding to its content as by contributing to its maturation and development. A modern language taught in this manner, would, by securing the general mental development of the pupil, enable the pupil to envisage the idea of a world community and be a worthy member of that community.

As regards the question of the optimum age for beginning the study of a new language, it was decided that in view of the experiments of introducing modern languages in elementary schools being carried out by various Member States, it would be wrong to discuss the question on a priori grounds and that it would be desirable to watch the results of the experiments...

6. The training of modern language teachers

This subject was also introduced by Miss Panandikar and discussed by the seminar on the first two days of the fourth and last week:

The topics presented included:

(a) A survey of the various main systems of language teacher training in different countries;
(b) The question of prior specialization at the university;
(c) The modern language teacher's educational equipment;
(d) Facilities which training authorities and school authorities should provide;
(e) The national and international organization of modern language teachers.

During the discussion participants showed that they attached greatest importance to proper qualifications and proper status for teachers, and to the granting of proper facilities to them by educational authorities. These points are illustrated by the following extracts from the report:

The equipment of the future teacher in /the modern language/ field should include:

(a) High standards of attainment in the language he proposes to teach: correct pronunciation... fluent and correct speech, facility of expression in writing, and advanced reading ability.

(b) Sound linguistic knowledge based on scientific study of the characteristic features of the language... and the ability to apply this knowledge in the classroom.

(c) Extensive knowledge of the literature and civilization of the country under study.

(d) An introduction to educational psychology and to the theoretical and practical problems of teaching, with special attention to the methods and techniques of teaching foreign languages and the use of audio-visual aids.

The seminar was of the opinion that it was necessary for educational and State authorities to provide them with certain essential facilities:

(a) There should be provision for prospective teachers of modern languages to spend some time, during their student days, in the country whose language they propose to teach.

(b) Modern language teachers in service should be given opportunity to visit the foreign country periodically under Exchange of Persons Programmes, through the granting of leave, absence with pay, or under any other schemes.

(c) There should be refresher courses for modern language teachers at regular intervals.

(d) There should be a stronger bond between the universities and the Training Centres and also between universities and practising teachers, particularly in matters of educational research.

(e) There should be easy access to books, journals and periodicals in the modern languages. In this connexion, well conducted library projects would meet the needs not only of those working in cities but also of those in remote places.

(f) Facilities for the supply and exchange of books, publications and teaching materials from one country to another should be provided and all obstacles to the free circulation of such books and materials be removed in conformity with the Agreement on the Importation of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Materials sponsored by Unesco.

(g) There should be opportunities for modern language teachers to hear native speakers when they happen to visit their country and to meet them socially.

(h) Regular programmes in modern languages should be provided on the radio.

It would be incumbent on managements of schools to see that the modern language teacher was treated as a specialist and given conditions under which he could teach the language effectively.

## VI. THE SPECIAL TOPICS

During the first two weeks of the seminar participants from a number of Asian Member States lectured informally on the special language problems, whether regional, national or international, which confront their respective countries. These lectures were followed by discussion periods. The list of countries included Cambodia, Ceylon, India and Indonesia. In addition to this series an address dealing initially with language problems in the Trust Territory of Somaliland under Italian Administration led to a discussion which ranged freely over language problems in Africa generally.

Professor Andersson's address on "Language Teaching in Elementary Schools in the United States of America" has already been referrred to under Section V. 4 above. It gave rise to a significant exchange of views not only concerning the optimum age for beginning language learning but also the general problem of bilingualism and its effect on proficiency in the mother tongue.

Dr. Presswood (United Kingdom) lectured on examination systems prevailing in his country.

The Unesco representative, assisted by the documents officer, conducted a round-table discussion regarding the two experimental working papers presented to the seminar, i.e. the "Working Bibliography" and "Modern Languages in the Schools". Recommendations made in the course of this discussion will be carried out during 1954. More detailed information concerning these plans is given under Section IX below.

## VII. ANCILLARY ACTIVITIES

A number of interesting activities were arranged at the suggestion of participants during the course of the seminar and after the original programme had been drawn up.

As a result of discussions on structural grading, which took place during the second week of the seminar, a panel discussion with illustrations was arranged for the morning of 22 August. The illustrations were given and the discussion led by Messrs. Bruton, Hill and Mackin (United Kingdom) and McCusker (Australia).

On the afternoon of the same day a committee appointed by the Director met the Ceylon Committee on the Use of National Languages as Media of Instruction. This committee, led by Mr. E. D. Jayasuriya, came up from Colombo at the request of the Government of Ceylon. Members of the Seminar Committee did not feel they could offer the Ceylon Committee concrete advice regarding the solution of the problem of the national languages in education, but were most willing to pass on information regarding current practice in their own countries.

During the third week of the seminar, and as a result of the interest aroused by discussions of the linguistic method, Professor McQuown (United States of America) gave five thirty-minute demonstration lessons in Turkish. These lessons were selected to illustrate different stages and were drawn from a manual published by the demonstrator.

Similarly, as the outcome of discussions regarding language teaching to migrants, it was arranged for Mr. McCusker (Australia) to give a demonstration lesson to an elementary class in one of the private schools of Nuwara Eliya.

Outside the hours of the regular seminar sessions, facilities were arranged for the demonstration of apparatus and recordings furnished by the Linguaphone Institute of London and for the audition of records from the "English by Radio" series produced by the British Broadcasting Corporation.

## VIII. OTHER REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The detailed study and discussion of modern language textbooks had been omitted from the already overcrowded programme because of lack of time. However, at the request of the members of the seminar, the Director appointed a special committee to suggest criteria for the selection of textbooks as well as principles to be followed in their production. At the conclusion of the seminar a lengthy report was submitted from which the following extracts are quoted:

> The author of a textbook is obviously expected to be well acquainted with the language and the country with which he is dealing. In the field of modern languages, an inadequate knowledge will be found to be less tolerable than in most other fields.
>
> The author should have had adequate experience in language teaching and should be familiar with the results of the latest relevant research in the field...
>
> In preparing either a series of books or a single book, he should never lose sight of the requirements of a course of study covering a given number of years...
>
> He should be familiar with the pupils' mother tongue, with their general background and their attainments in other subjects according to their mental age, or he should collaborate with someone who is...
>
> A textbook should contain a clear and detailed statement of its aims, the principles and methods followed in it, and its scope.
>
> New learning items should be presented one at a time, and each consolidated before another is attempted.
>
> New learning items, whether sounds, intonation patterns, words (or new meanings of words already known), inflexions or sentence patterns ("structures"), should be introduced in an order graded according to difficulty, but no attempt should be made to concentrate on one type of item at a time...
>
> Great care should be taken to keep within the limits of vocabulary, sentence patterns, etc. covered at each stage.
>
> It should be remembered that each new meaning of a word may have to be treated as a fresh learning item.
>
> Guide books for teachers, giving detailed advice on how to present and consolidate each item in a methodical, interesting and attractive way would be welcome.
>
> An index of vocabulary and sentence patterns used should be provided, either in the textbook or in the teacher's book...
>
> Only normal language in current use should be employed.
>
> While the simplification of original texts by the replacement of words deemed too difficult is condemned as a perversion of the original, the practice of rewriting such works within predetermined limits of vocabulary and sentence patterns is considered necessary in the early stages...
>
> In selecting works to be abridged or issued in adapted form for the use of young children, care should be taken to see that they represent the best in the literature of the country in whose language they are written...
>
> As soon as possible, pupils should be introduced to extracts from the works of creative writers in their original form.
>
> An appeal is made to publishers all over the world to grant facilities to authors of textbooks to include selected passages from copyright material...
>
> The author of any manuscript for language teaching should make sure that his work offers a fair and accurate picture of the country concerned.
>
> If, in his textbook, a writer deals with a language and a country other than his own, he should submit his textbook in advance for advice to one or more competent persons belonging to the country whose language and civilization are presented in the book.
>
> If the textbook is intended for use in a country other than that of the textbook writer, care should be taken that it avoids any prejudice against the country where it is to be used.
>
> Language Teachers Associations should be aware of their responsibility for publicly pointing out linguistic and cultural inaccuracies concerning their own country in textbooks produced in or brought into their own country.
>
> Objections raised in or by a country named in a textbook should be transmitted from one country to another through the intermediary of Unesco, if this is possible.

At a later stage the Director appointed still another committee to make recommendations regarding the best methods of teaching English as a second language. This step was taken to meet the request of participants specially interested in this question. As the report produced by this committee dealt with the teaching of one

particular language of world communication, it was decided not to table it nor to distribute it as a seminar document. It contains, however, a large number of useful suggestions widely applicable to modern language teaching in general. Extracts from it, suitably revised, will undoubtedly be used in any more detailed publication arising out of the seminar.

At the concluding session of the seminar a resolution, moved by Dr. W. L. Presswood (United Kingdom), was adopted, strongly urging that the mother tongue be used whenever possible in all countries and at all levels as the medium of instruction; that, where these mother tongues do not possess sufficient resources of vocabulary, steps be taken to remedy these deficiencies; and finally that

> in all States and countries the maximum facilities be created and maintained for the study of the widest possible range of foreign languages, irrespective of geographical proximity, since this is the most effective means of training men and women capable of transmitting to other nations the science and culture of their own land, and of making available to their own peoples the achievements and thought of other countries.

## IX. FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

Reference has already been made under Section IV above to the detailed study to be prepared by the Secretariat of Unesco and the Director of the seminar. This will be completed during 1954.

The Secretariat of Unesco will also prepare during 1954 a revised and completed edition of "Modern Languages in the Schools" (Educational Studies and Documents, No. VI). To this effect contracts have been signed with international modern language teachers' organizations which will undertake the revision and annotation of the "Working Bibliography". Both these initiatives are in accordance with the wishes expressed by the seminar.

Unesco also stands ready to encourage regional and national seminars on the teaching of modern languages for international understanding and which may arise out of the seminar at Nuwara Eliya.

Some National Commissions have already embarked on follow-up activities of their own. An invitation has been sent by the High Commissioner of the French Republic in Western Germany to German modern language teachers and suggesting the reciprocal examination of textbooks in this field with the view to reaching an agreement regarding possible revisions. This initiative is in line with similar moves in connexion with the revision of history and geography textbooks which have taken place in a number of countries.

The following published articles arising out of the seminar have been brought to the attention of the Secretariat of Unesco:

(1) Theodore Andersson: The Unesco Seminar on the Teaching of Modern Languages in "School and Society", Vol. LXXVII, January-June 1953.

(2) A. Bohlen: Neusprachliches Unesco-Seminar auf Ceylon in "Mitteilungsblatt des allgemeinen deutschen Neuphilologenverbandes", Berlin, 30 November 1953.

(3) Louis Landré: Le Stage de l'Unesco à Nuwara Eliya (Ceylan); étude des langues vivantes et compréhension internationale in "Langues Modernes", Paris, December 1953.

(4) W. L. Presswood: From Sèvres to Ceylon in "Modern Languages", London, December 1953.

In addition, the issue of the Unesco Courier for January 1954, devoted to languages and language teaching, was to a large extent, inspired by the proceedings of the Ceylon Seminar.

## APPENDIX A

**Documents prepared before the seminar for the use of members of the seminar only**

| | |
|---|---|
| M. le Recteur Audra | The System of Linking of Schools and the Teaching of Modern Languages |
| M. le Recteur Audra | Foreign Language Assistants for the Teaching of Modern Languages |
| Australian National Advisory Committee for Unesco (prepared by the Migrant Education Section of the Commonwealth Office of Education under the direction of Mr. B.A. Pittman) | The Linguistic and Cultural Assimilation of Migrants in Australia |
| Barrier, Paul | Article on International School Correspondence and the Teaching of Modern Languages |
| Castro de la Fuente, Angélica | Teaching Spanish to Mexican Indians. An account of the use of the Mother Tongue as an Initial Stage in Learning the National Language |
| Cheeseman, H.R. | The Teaching of English in Malaya |
| Closset, Fr. | The Teaching of Modern Languages and International Understanding |
| Elliott, A.V.P. | The Teaching of English in East Africa |
| French National Commission for Unesco | Report on the Teaching of the French Language Abroad |
| Gatenby, E.V. | The Teaching of English in Turkey |
| Ghate, V.D. & Ryburn, W.M. | The Teaching of English in India: The Place of English; The Shift in Aims and Methods |
| Gurrey, P. | A Study on the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language in Countries in Asia, Africa and the Mediterranean |
| Haque, Dr. Serajul | The Teaching of Arabic in Pakistan |
| Israel National Commission for Unesco | On Teaching Hebrew to the Nation, Aims, Projects, Education Institutions, Methods, with Special Reference to the Problem of the Immigrants |
| Jumsâi, Manich | Comments on the Teaching of Modern Languages in Thailand with Particular Reference to English |
| Kirkconnell, Watson | Canada's Language Problem in Education |
| Ludowyke, E.F.C. | The Problem of the "Adopted Language" in Ceylon |
| Picazo de Murray, Elena | The Teaching of Spanish in Mexico to Students from the United States: Note on the Evolution of a Method |
| Secretariat of Unesco | Educational Studies and Documents, No. VI: Modern Languages in the Schools |
| Secretariat of Unesco | The Teaching of Modern Languages by Radio: A Survey of Some Problems and Achievements |
| Secretariat of Unesco. | A Working Bibliography on the Teaching of Modern Languages |
| Swedish National Commission for Unesco | The Teaching of English in Sweden by a Method Combining Correspondence Courses and Radio Broadcasting |

**Documents presented during the seminar for use of members of the seminar only**

| | |
|---|---|
| Andersson, Prof. Theodore | The Teaching of Foreign Languages in the Elementary Schools in the United States of America |
| Baglioni, Prof. Emilio | The Linguistic Problem in the Trust Territory of Somaliland under Italian Administration |
| Hoshiyama, S. & Matsukawa, S. | The Teaching of Foreign Languages in Japan |
| Wijayasingha, D. A. | The Language Problem in South Asia: (a) Ceylon |

## APPENDIX B

## MEMBERS OF THE SEMINAR

### Staff

**Director:** Professor Theodore Andersson, Director, Master of Arts in Teaching Programme, Yale University

**Unesco Representative:** Dr. Felix Walter, Department of Education, Unesco

**Administrator:** Colonel R. J. F. Mendis, Deputy Director of Education, Office of Education, Colombo, Ceylon

**Professional Advisers to the Director:** Oberschulrat Dr. Adolf Bohlen, Münster, President of the German Modern Language Teachers Association, Director of the "Landesinstitut für neue Sprachen", Münster
Professor Louis Landré, University of Paris, President of the French Modern Language Teachers Association and the International Federation of Modern Language Teachers
Miss S. Panandikar, Principal, Secondary Training College, Bombay, India

**Documents Officer:** Miss M. Beckman, Department of Education, Unesco

### Participants from Member States

**Australia**

Mr. J. McCusker, Officer-in-charge of the Migrant Education Section of the Commonwealth Office of Education

**Cambodia**

Mr. Vannsak Keng, Lecturer in Indo-Khmer Literature at the Lycée Sisowath, Phnom-Penh

**Canada**

Miss Florence E. Benn[illegible]e, Nutana Collegiate, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, now Dean of Women, Indore Christian College, Indore, India

**Ceylon**

Reverend Brother Conran, Principal, Maris Stella College, Negombo, Ceylon
Mr. E. Ediriwira, Principal, Government Central College, Hanwella, Ceylon (Representative of Government Grade I Principals' Union)
Mrs. T. Janszé, Principal, St. Paul's College, Milagiriya, Bambalapitiya, Ceylon (Representative of the Ceylon Headmistresses' Association)
Mrs. C. L. Motwani, Principal, Musaeus College, Colombo, Ceylon (Representative of the All-Ceylon Union of Teachers)
Mr. R. Sri Pathmanathan, Lecturer in Classics, University of Ceylon, Peradeniya, Ceylon
Mr. D. A. Wijayasingha, Assistant Director of Education, Education Department, Colombo, Ceylon (Leader of the delegation)

**France**

Mr. Serge Denis, Inspector-General of Public Instruction (Leader of the delegation)
Mr. Maurice Grangié, Director of Education, Pondicherry
Mr. C. Journot, Cultural Counsellor, French Embassy, New Delhi, India
Mr. Pierre Meile, Professor at the School of Oriental Languages, Paris

**German Federal Republic**

Dr. Elisabeth Winkelmann, Lecturer in the Teacher Training Institute, Hamburg

**India**

Shri A. K. Chanda, President, Board of Secondary Education, West Bengal
Professor K. N. Misra, Professor of English, Science College, Patna
Mrs. G. Parthasarathi, Professor of English, Presidency College, Madras

**Indonesia**

Mr. Fr. Wachendorff, Acting Inspector of English Teaching, Ministry of Education, Djakarta

**Israel**

Mr. Judah Shuval, Director Ulpan Ben-Yehuda in Jerusalem (Adult Education Schools for Adult Immigrants)

Italy and Trust Territory of Somaliland under Italian Administration
Professor Emilio Baglioni, Director of Secondary Instruction in Somaliland

Japan
Mr. Saburo Hoshiyama, Assistant Professor of English, Nagoya University (Leader of the delegation)
Mr. Shotaro Matsukawa, Principal, Shonana High School, Fujisawa-shi

Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
Mr. Jiryis Qusus, Inspector of English, Ministry of Education, Amman

Pakistan
Dr. Serajul Haque, Head of the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Dacca University

Thailand
Miss M. L. Boonlua Kunjara, Assistant Director of the Triam Udom School

Switzerland
Mr. Gilbert Etienne, Lecturer in Hindu Art, Lahore University

United Kingdom
Mr. J.G. Bruton, Education Officer, British Council, New Delhi
Prof. L.A. Hill, Professor designate of English Language and Literature in the University of Indonesia
Mr. R. Mackin, Education Officer (Linguistics), British Council, Pakistan
Dr. W.L. Presswood, Chairman, Council of the Modern Language Association (Leader of the delegation)
Mr. S. Stevens, Director, "English by Radio", British Broadcasting Corporation

United States of America
Dr. Norman A. McQuown, Professor of Anthropology and Linguistics, University of Chicago

Viet-Nam
Professor Nguyen Vu Thieu, Professor of Philosophy and English Grammar at the University of Hanoi

## Observers

Indian National Science Documentation Centre (INSDOC), New Delhi
Mr. A.L. Gardner (United Kingdom), Unesco Adviser in Scientific Translation

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World Organization of the Teaching Profession
Mr. C.S. Ponnuthurai (Ceylon), General Secretary, All-Ceylon Union of Teachers